

Tennessee Department of Correction Kicks Off Year-Long Initiative Focused On Employee Appreciation and Recognition

In January 2005, Correction Commissioner Quenton White announced the kick off of the “Year of the Correctional Employee,” a 12-month campaign designed to show appreciation and recognition of employee groups for their hard work and dedication.

“Employee recognition, whether on a small or large scale, is often overlooked. That’s why this type of initiative is so important and long overdue,” said White. “By implementing this campaign, the Department of Correction is committed to finding positive, fiscally responsible ways to recognize the numerous contributions our employees make each and everyday.”

TDOC employees have been divided into groups according to staffing standards and a different group has been selected for recognition every month. For example, the month of February featured education and library employees. Other groups and programs to be honored include health and mental health, correctional officers, maintenance, employee assistance program, unit management and treatment, food service and administration. The department also deemed it appropriate to honor our volunteers and employee families because their work and support is equally critical to our success.

The facilities are planning activities and programs every month that benefit correctional employees, placing special emphasis on the recognition group in the spotlight. Programs focus on career and wellness topics, opportunities for career shadowing, implementation of an employee spotlight program, incorporating family oriented activities and much more.

A monthly calendar of events for the Year of the Correctional Employee initiative has been posted on the department’s intranet site for staff to review. Activities and events are planned at TDOC facilities across the state and central office in Nashville, according to the following schedule:

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Year of the Correctional Employee Events Across the State

West Tennessee State Penitentiary

In recognition of the Education and Library employees being recognized during the month of February, three employees from this area were selected as outstanding employees:

J.D. Poiner – J.D. is the instructor for the small engine class and also maintains and repairs equipment at the facility. He maintains a high standard of excellence on all of the work he does. In his spare time, J.D. enjoys hunting, fishing and hiking.

Tom Young - Tom has been with the education department since 1993. He is an academic teacher who has helped students receive their GED certificates. In most cases, the students come to his class at a very low level. This is a testament to his hard work and dedication. Tom enjoys horseback riding in his spare time.

Ilois Jordan - Ilois is a correctional clerical officer whose duties include purchasing books, as well as, the daily supervision of all aspects of the library operation. She is a woman who has strong family values, and enjoys reading, listening to music and writing.



Northeast Correctional Complex

The first Year of the Correctional Employee luncheon was held February 18, 2005. The luncheon was held in honor of the Education Department and was an outstanding success. Commissioner White and several senior staff members were in attendance and made a special point to share in the recognition.



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Commissioner's Corner

Spring has definitely sprung and the Year of the Correctional Employee Campaign is in full swing. I have received an enormous amount of positive feedback from Memphis to Mountain City regarding the activities and events that have taken place so far. I hope all TDOC employees continue to enjoy and reap the benefits of what is being planned in your honor. After all...it's your year!



I'd like to utilize this column as an opportunity to address an issue that has received quite a bit of attention lately, not only in the media but also on Capitol Hill. That topic is correctional officer salaries and the severe pay inequity that exists between salaries paid to TDOC prison security staff and the salaries paid by local governments and the federal government.

As I'm sure many of you are aware, there is a bill making its way through the General Assembly this year proposing to increase correctional officer salaries by almost 17 percent, bringing the annual pay from \$21,324 to \$26,472, a figure in line with the Southeast average. This proposal also provides an even higher raise for correctional managers. For example, correctional captains would receive a 32 percent increase, a salary raise of \$12,716, bringing their take-home pay up to \$52,305.

This proposed bill would have a major impact on the inequity and help close the gap that exists between TDOC officers and their counterparts in different areas of government. However, there is a \$19 million fiscal note attached to this legislation. Funding this pay raise will not be an easy mission to accomplish, especially during this time of maintaining fiscal responsibility and the state's ongoing efforts to get a handle on the TennCare program.

This salary boost would definitely enhance our ability to attract and retain the caliber of officers we want and need in the state's prison system. It is extremely important to me that we lower our turnover rate, so we can put a stop to the revolving door of officers we are losing every year and at the same time, retain our training investments.

While I do not know first hand, I can say with confidence that a correctional officers job is an extremely difficult task any day of the week, and it's not for everyone. We will keep a close watch on this bill as it makes its way through the legislative committees and make sure that everyone is informed of any outcomes.

Let's continue to have a great year of the correctional employee and I hope to see you soon. ■

Commissioner White Creates Task Forces to Enact Positive Change within the Department of Correction

By Cyndi Taylor, TDOC Policy, Planning and Research Division

-The primary mission of each task force is to comprehensively examine and evaluate issues related to the topic assigned. From this, clear recommendations will be developed that will guide the future of the Tennessee Department of Correction.

How It All Got Started

In an effort to foster on-going communication between the commissioner and the wardens, quarterly meetings are held to openly discuss any issues and concerns facing the department. It was during these warden's meetings that the task force topics were first identified and developed. Each task force represents one multifaceted topic that the wardens identified as most pressing for the advancement of the Department of Correction.

TDOC Task Force Topics:

Technology	Employee/Inmate Relationships
Specialty Populations	Correctional Officer Turnover
Training	Programming
Classification	Personnel
Crisis Management	External Security
Prison Rape Elimination Act (PREA)	

Task force Participants

A warden leads each task force. Commissioner White chose task force members and leaders to participate based on experience, interest and knowledge of the topic area. Each task force included members from Central Office and the institutions.

Task force Activities

Task force leaders and members were assigned a critical task. They were asked to do more than just research a specific topic, or get together and brainstorm for a couple of hours. The task force members were asked to enact positive change in the department and to improve the services provided to the citizens of Tennessee. This required and continues to require, a significant commitment from all task force members. While each task force was given a great deal of discretion in terms of methodology, there were inevitable similarities across taskforces. Primary task force activities included clear identification of related issues and problems, a critical examination of current services and programs, intensive best-practice research, data collection, policy review and development, the development of clear recommendations and an impact analysis. The findings of each task force will be recorded in a specified format:

Task force Report

Definition of problem	Recommendations
Benefits	Cost/Obstacles
Solutions	Internal Implications
Recommendation Summary	

Task force Requirements

Each task force member was asked to participate fully in the process. In addition, the task force leader provided a progress update at the March warden's meeting and a final task force report will be completed by June. This report will include recommendations, benefits and obstacles, solutions and policy implications identified by the task force.

The final task force recommendations will be used to guide the future direction of the Tennessee Department of Correction. The task force initiative will not end with the final report; rather their reports will serve as catalysts for positive change in the department. ■

TDOC UNVEILS NEW LOOK: REPRESENTS CHANGE IN PHILOSOPHY

Tennessee Department of Correction Commissioner Quenton I. White recently unveiled the department's new logo, highlighting Correction's new organizational structure and focus on rehabilitation.



The department underwent a major restructuring in 2004 to place more of an emphasis on the role of rehabilitating inmates. In line with this shift in philosophy, White created the Division of Rehabilitative Services to place greater emphasis on programs that targets preparing inmates for release and successful transition back into the community. The department's new focus now puts this mission front and center.

"There is a very clear message in the logo: TDOC is the key to the future with a strong focus on rehabilitation," said White. "This cultural change is quite different from the old days of simply warehousing prisoners centered around the 'lock them up and toss the key' mentality."

The logo also recognizes the department's 5,200 employees as "keys to the future" because of their unwavering commitment and dedication to the state's correctional system each and every day. The logo will become an integral part of the Year of the Correctional Employee campaign, a yearlong initiative created by Commissioner White to honor correctional employees for their hard work and dedication.

TDOC worked with the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development Creative Services Division to design the logo. The logo will gradually be introduced into the correctional system, beginning with the department's Web page and informational brochures. ■

TDOC Kicks Off Yearlong Initiative... Continued

January- Kick Off "Year of the Correctional Employee" Campaign

February- Education and Library

March- Employee Assistance Program

April- Health and Mental Health

May- Correctional Officers

June- Administration

July- Employee Family

August- Unit Management and Treatment

September- Volunteers

October- Food Service

November- Maintenance

December- Conclusion and Reflection

Planning for the campaign began with an informal survey that was delivered to staff members within the 12 state-managed institutions to gather employee opinion on what kind of recognition would be meaningful and the planning committee received an overwhelming response. The majority of respondents agreed that it is important to be recognized for their work and they think staff should be rewarded for meeting specific criteria "above and beyond" normal duties. Employees also provided essential feedback on specific types of recognition that means the most to them, which was incorporated into monthly activities and programs that will take place throughout the year. ■

Year of the Correctional Employee Events Across the State Continued

Bill Wade and his vocational cooking class prepared the delicious meal, and Jeff Lewis and his vocational greenhouse class donated a beautiful geranium plant. One education staff member stated, "This is the nicest thing that has been done since I have been here at NECX," which was just one of the many positive comments made during the luncheon.

The Year of Correctional Employee celebrations continued during the month of March with an "EAP" Awareness theme. Commissary, Maintenance, Procurement, Recreation and Warehouse staff were recognized on Friday, March 18, 2005 with a special luncheon. Staff recognized for this month were also acknowledged in "Northeast News" paper, which is published monthly regarding what their jobs consist of and a note regarding "spare time". Information and handouts were available for staff regarding EAP, ways to have less stress on the job and in their life.



Brushy Mountain Correctional Complex

BMCX held it's first Year of the Correctional Employee celebration Friday, February 18 by honoring the Education/Library staff with a special luncheon. A delicious meal of lasagna, salad, bread, dessert & drinks was prepared by the Commercial Food class and served to everyone. Among invited special guests were Sharmila Patel, TDOD Director of Education; Becky Ruppe, Morgan County Executive; David Freels, Morgan County Director of Schools, and Brian Langley, Morgan County News.

Snacks and drinks were served at the shift briefing at both sites during the week of February 20th in conjunction with the Year of the Correctional Employee initiative.

Riverbend Maximum Security Institution

The staff at RMSI hosted a St. Patrick's Day/Year of the Correctional Employee luncheon on March 17, 2005 for the warehouse personnel. Deputy Warden Mike Crutcher joined in the celebration, thanking the employees for their hard work and commitment to corrections.



Warden Ricky Bell hosted a healthy eating luncheon for staff on Tuesday, March 8, 2005, promoting healthy food choices and how to make them. ■

TDOD Personnel Gets a New Name

On February 9, 2005, Commissioner White announced the name change of the Central Office Personnel section to Central Office Human Resources.

He stated that this change is more representative of the many functions in the area of human resources. The staff in central office, as well as in the field, will continue to support the needs of our most valuable resource...our employees! ■

FUTURE FELON POPULATION REPORT PRESENTED BEFORE THE SELECT OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE ON CORRECTIONS

Tennessee Department of Correction Commissioner Quenton White and former Director of Policy, Planning and Research Gabrielle Chapman appeared before the Select Oversight Committee on Corrections on February 28, 2005, to present the annual population projections of the Tennessee incarcerated felon population.

The projection data is produced for the Tennessee Department of Correction by JFA Associates in Washington D.C. The report is then compiled and prepared by the Department of Correction's Policy, Planning, and Research unit.

Ms. Chapman discussed the following highlights and findings of the current projection report:

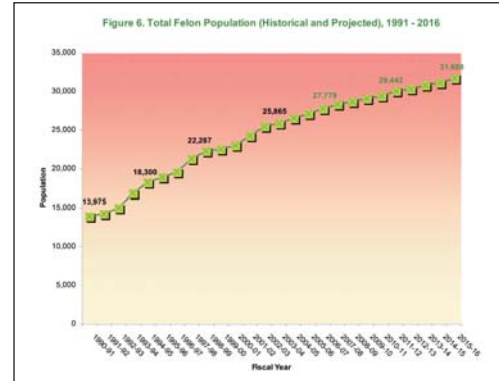
Model Accuracy

An evaluation of the December 2002 felon population projection model revealed that the model performed remarkably well (0.4% average monthly deviation from December 2002-November 2004). Further, the average monthly deviation was only 0.4% between December 2003 and November 2004, which indicates excellent performance as the model was in its second year of use. It should be noted that for several months, the model projections showed virtually no deviation (0.0%-0.1%) from the actual felon population of Tennessee.

During a mid-year assessment in May 2003, it was determined that the projected population figures generated by the model deviated from the actual felon population in Tennessee by an average of only 0.5%. At this time it was decided that no mid-year recast was necessary as the model was performing well within the acceptable range of +/-2%.

The model continued to perform well during the first half of FY 2004-2005, never surpassing the +/-2% range, which indicates acceptable accuracy. In fact, the projections never deviated more than 0.9% from the actual felon population during this time.

Incarcerated Felon Population Projections



Total Population

During the past fiscal year, the incarcerated felon population (including TDOC backup and locally sentenced felons) grew from 25,370 in July 2003 to 25,865 in June 2004, an increase of 2.0%.

Over the past 14 years (1991-2004) the total incarcerated population has increased 85.1% (from 13,975 to 25,865), with a mean annual percent change of 4.9%.

Over the *next* 12 fiscal years (through June 2016), Tennessee's incarcerated population is projected to increase a total of 19.2% (from 26,593 to 31,688) with a mean annual change of 1.7%.

Projections by Gender

Males: The overall growth rate for male felons for the 12-year projection period is projected to be 18.9% (increasing from 23,973 in June 2004 to 29,326 in June 2016).

Females: The anticipated growth rate for female felons is slightly higher, with a 22.3% increase expected during the 12-year projection period (from 1,892 in June 2004 to 2,362 in June 2016). ■

MEDALS OF RECOGNITION MAKE A COMEBACK

TDOC employees demonstrate professionalism and face difficult situations each and everyday. There are a few individuals that sometimes go above and beyond the call of duty by performing an act of bravery, valor or amazing heroism that averts emergencies and sometimes saves a life.

That's why Commissioner White decided to ramp up the department's policy for awarding the medals of recognition. He has formed a final review committee to conduct a careful and exhaustive review of all employees, work groups and/or volunteers nominated for either the medal of valor or medal of merit.

The review committee is chaired by Jim Dickman, and includes Susan McMillan and Zoyle Jones. This committee will review all recommendations and present their final selections to the commissioner for final approval. Commissioner White will personally present the medals to the very deserving individuals for their extraordinary actions. ■



Tennessee Department of Correction Plans For Second Criminal Justice Summit In 2006

The state's Criminal Justice Summit held in November 2004 was the first step in planning Tennessee's criminal justice future. TDOC's summit planning team is now working diligently to plan Summit 2006 to ensure the recommendations created in the first summit are used as a platform or a blueprint from which to develop a plan of action for the criminal justice system in Tennessee.

The recommendations developed in 2004 set the stage for the 2006 Criminal Justice Summit. The theme for the 2004 Summit was "Taking a critical look at Tennessee's criminal justice system: Creating a roadmap for Tennessee's future." Tentatively, the theme of the 2006 Summit will focus on solutions and the implementation of these recommendations, "Taking action: Paving the way to Tennessee's criminal justice future."

The suggested format for the next summit builds on the energy and success of Summit 2004, and addresses the issues raised by the planners in the post mortem meeting and from the evaluation surveys. The East region was underrepresented at the 2004 Summit possibly due to its Middle Tennessee location. To encourage participation from each of the regions, a preliminary Summit 2006 meeting will be held in each of the grand divisions of the state. The recommendations will be discussed and plans of action will be developed at each of these meetings while acknowledging the unique impacts that each recommendation or action plan may have on a particular division. Delegates will be selected at each divisional meeting and will be asked to attend a final Summit 2006 meeting to present the action plans, as well as discuss

any concerns, issues and impacts that were identified.

Some government agencies were also underrepresented at the 2004 Summit, due to part to the short planning schedule. TDOC is working off a longer planning timeline to allow for earlier notification of the event. Save the date cards will be sent to all previous participants and informational brochures will be provided to persons invited to the 2006 Summit who were not involved, or who were unable, to attend the 2004 Summit.



Our vision for the 2006 Criminal Justice Summit is to effect definitive positive change in Tennessee's Criminal Justice system and to create a robust model of communication and action that other states may replicate to advance their own criminal justice systems.

The primary goal for the 2006 Summit is to continue the work of the 2004 Summit. TDOC Commissioner Quenton White asked the 2004 Summit participants to examine and recommend methods for enhancing the management for our criminal justice services, identify necessary improvements, expose unnecessary and inefficient archival processes, and to develop recommendations to overcome these limitations and obstacles, while at the same time holding offenders accountable and protecting the people of Tennessee. This process will be continued at the 2006 Summit, where plans of action will be developed from recommendations, and the most appropriate methods of monitoring and evaluating effective change will be defined.

Funding for Summit 2006 will be sought from the federal government through Byrne grants, with additional technical assistance from National Institute of Corrections. The Summit 2006 planning team has also discussed this event with the state's new consulting services group within the Finance and Administration Division. ■

Commissioner White Addresses The University of Tennessee at Martin's WestStar Group

"Public Policy Issues: What is Happening in Tennessee"

Correction Commissioner Quenton White attended and spoke about the Department of Correction during the University of Tennessee at Martin WestStar program titled "Public Policy Issues: What is Happening in Tennessee," held March 8-9, 2005, in the Old Supreme Court Chambers of the State Capitol.

The WestStar program included legislative and government leaders who are shaping the future of Tennessee. The program centered around a give-and-take discussion of policy issues with the majority of West Tennessee legislators, members of the Governor's cabinet and constitutional officers of the state.

Following the welcome address by UT Martin Chancellor Dr. Nick Dunagan, White addressed the group about the Department of Correction, including what we do, recent departmental changes, health care, alternatives to incarceration and public policies.

"It was quite an honor to be a part of this leadership program and to be able to share the many facets of the Department of Correction with the participants," said White. "With seven state prisons in West Tennessee, four of which are state-run and three are privately managed, WestStar is an exciting and fitting group to discuss our commitment to our local communities."

WestStar was created in 1989 to serve the 21 counties of West Tennessee by providing leadership development and training for selected participants. The group consists of seven specially designed seminar programs addressing contemporary major issues important to the development of West Tennessee. Focusing on problems and potentials of West Tennessee, WestStar stresses the importance of regional and community responsibility for creating progress. ■

Tennessee Amachi Initiative

A partnership of the Tennessee Department of Correction, Tennessee's Association of Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies and the entire Faith-Based Community

By: Haley Hopper, Director of Volunteer Services

In January of 2004, the Tennessee Department of Correction began cultivating a partnership with the Big Brothers Big Sisters agencies of Memphis and Nashville in an attempt to construct an Amachi program in Tennessee.

Amachi is a Nigerian word meaning, "who knows but what God has brought us through this child." The program was created in Philadelphia in 2000 through a funding partnership with Big Brothers Big Sisters of America and PEW Charitable Trusts. In just 4 1/2 years, Amachi has grown to include 46 states and over 50,000 children across the country. The program piggybacks on the 100 year old success of Big Brothers Big Sisters mentoring structure, by matching a child who has a parent incarcerated with a mentor from a faith-based institution in that child's community. The mentor and the child agree to meet for one hour, once a week, for one year. Their activities are as unique as the children themselves, and at the end of one year a bond can be formed that no time or distance will ever take away. Often the matches will continue, even if informally, throughout the child's life.

By April 2004, TDOC had created a partnership that consisted of six Big Brothers Big Sisters Agencies, four other state agencies, state and local government entities spanning from Memphis to Mountain City and community groups like the Nashville Sounds and the Memphis Grizzlies. All of these people made a promise to be committed to the children of Tennessee's incarcerated population. In August 2004, the partnership was notified that grant funding for the project had been awarded by the Federal Department of Health and Human Services, to the tune of \$3 million dollars over three years.

Now, a mere 15 months after this project began, Tennessee is on the cusp of having one of the largest Amachi programs in the country. Recruitment has begun in the Tennessee Prison for Women, and Mark Luttrell Correctional Complex. In the coming weeks and months matches will be made, and by August, over 1,000 matches will be established.

The heart of the Amachi project, and the livelihood of its success depend upon the commitment of the communities where these children live, work, play and go to school. Statistically, children who have a parent incarcerated are 70 percent more likely to end up in jail themselves, and seven million children in the United States have a parent under supervision; either in jail, state or federal prison, or on probation or parole. The success of Tennessee's communities depends upon the success of projects like Amachi.

For more information or to become involved, please contact Haley Hopper at Haley Hopper at haley.hopper@state.tn.us. ■

TDOC Presents Primary Goals and Initiatives to the Board of Probation and Parole: "Moving Toward a Renewed Emphasis on Rehabilitation"

Tennessee Department of Correction Commissioner Quenton White, along with several members of the senior staff were invited to present the major initiatives of the Department of Correction to the Board of Probation and Parole (BOPP) during their monthly administrative meeting Wednesday, March 23, 2005.



Deputy Commissioner Gayle Ray, Assistant Commissioner of Rehabilitative Services Jim Cosby, Assistant Commissioner of Administration Cathy Posey, Victim's Services Director Sheryl DeMott and former Policy, Planning and Research Director Gabrielle Chapman joined Commissioner White to present TDOC initiatives of importance to BOPP. TDOC's primary goals and commitments include the appointment of a new leadership team, renewed emphasis on rehabilitative services and the reduction of recidivism, controlling costs, leadership development, departmental task forces and review of medical service provisions to assure appropriate inmate care.

Correction officials also presented updated information on planning for the 2006 Criminal Justice Summit, population projections, funded capital projects, parole-hearing changes through victim's services, transition center proposals and work group ideas.

Board members thanked the commissioner and his team for joining the monthly meeting and for their thoughtful presentation. ■

Statewide News

WEST TENNESSEE

WTSP- WTSP adopted eight horses through the Wild Horses and Burro Adoption Center in Cross Plains, TN. These horses came from the Sheldon National Wildlife Refuge in Nevada through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service relocation and adoptions program. There are thousands of horses that are awaiting adoption to avoid destruction. The **TODAY** Show recently aired (Sunday (3/13/05) an extensive story on this program, including information on the success that is occurring within the Colorado DOC in the taming, training and adoption of these horses.



It is WTSP's hope to mirror this program on a smaller scale and be a continuing resource for the successful adoption of these horses.

NWCX- Instructor Gerald Bell and his advanced building trades class at NWCX have been making renovations to the St. John II

Missionary Baptist Church in Tiptonville. Instructor Bell and his crew are building two restrooms onto the church and re-bricking the front of the church.



WCBC- Lieutenant Kenneth Inman, a twenty-year employee of the Wayne County Boot Camp, fell sick last year and in June 2004 had to go on dialysis due to his kidneys ceasing to function. Kenneth needed a transplant and waited months for a donor until it was determined that his wife was an acceptable donor. On February 9, 2005, Kenneth and Kay, husband and wife of thirty-eight years went to Centennial Hospital in Nashville where they both underwent surgery.

Centennial Hospital informed Kenneth and Kay that this transplant was only the second husband and wife team they had successfully completed. ■

MIDDLE TENNESSEE

CENTRAL OFFICE- TDOC was selected to participate in the 2005 Partners for Excellence in Psychiatry (PEP): Neuroscience Treatment Team Partner (NTTP) Training Program. The program was held February 14 - 17, 2005 at the Center for Excellence in Psychiatry, Piscataway, New Jersey. It is sponsored by a grant from Eli Lilly and Company. This program targets inmates with persistent mental illness, educating them in relapse prevention, wellness, etc.

Mental Health Director Dr. Jeanine Miller submitted the application on behalf of TDOC. After being accepted, she selected a team that would implement the program and they traveled to New Jersey to participate in the training. The team included Dr. Miller, Cathie Cline (Deputy Warden Health and Treatment DSNF), Cheryl McCormick (Psychological Examiner DSNF) and William Mays, MD (Medical Director, MHM stationed at DSNF). The new program will be implemented at DSNF by April 10, 2005.



CBCX- CBCX staff welcomed guest speaker Stan Jablonski from the District Attorney's office to speak to staff on personal identity

theft on Thursday, March 24, 2005. This event was in conjunction with EAP month and the Year of the Correctional Employee Campaign.

DSNF- DeBerry Special Needs Facility inmates were saddened by the news of the deadly tsunami that struck Southeast Asia in December, and felt compelled to do something to help the victims of this terrible disaster. The inmates built a custom jewelry box, approximately 30"x24" in size. Beginning February 1, 2005, DeBerry employees has the opportunity to bid on the jewelry box with all proceeds going to the American Red Cross Tsunami Relief Fund.



DSNF Inmate Jobs Coordinator Jason Saunders said the activities and donations made by the DeBerry Special Needs Facility inmate population raised a total of \$327.00. The American Red Cross was moved by the compassion shown and amount of money raised, and the inmates should be commended for their humanitarian efforts. A drawing was held on February 14, 2005, and personnel tech Caroline Sutton was announced as the lucky winner of the jewelry box.

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Statewide News Continued

MIDDLE TENNESSEE continued...

TCA- The academy celebrated St. Patrick's Day during the Training Advisory Board's luncheon. The cafeteria was decorated with green for everyone on the Board. Since March was EAP month, TCA had a "Lunch and Learn" where Dr. Carol Boone spoke to the group about the opportunities available through the EAP.

TPFW- On February 10, 2005, Warden Linda Dodson attended a breakfast sponsored by the volunteer group "Better Decisions." This group has provided programs and mentoring (one volunteer per each involved inmate) for 20 years at TPFW. As part of their 20th anniversary, they are sponsoring a shrubbery and flower garden at the facility. ■

EAST TENNESSEE

STSRCF- On March 16th, STSRCF held their Annual CERT/Hostage Negotiators Banquet at Cumberland Mountain State Park. Guest speakers were from the Cumberland County Sheriff's Department. Sheriff Butch Burgess and some of his staff gave a presentation on the seriousness of the Methamphetamine problem and how it is affecting children in homes where meth is being made. Assistant Commissioner Roland Colson was also in attendance.

BMCC- On March 15, 2005, seven employees from BMCC participated in *Andrea Walks for Tennessee Children* across the Ninth Judicial District, which includes Morgan, Roane, Loudon and Meigs counties. The 11-mile walk was to raise public awareness about child sexual abuse and to raise money to fund child advocacy programs across Tennessee.

BMCC raised over \$1,200 and provided several dollhouses, which were made by the Building Trades Class inmates, to the Child



Advocacy Center in Lenoir City on behalf of BMCC. Because BMCC contributed more than \$1,000, they became a member of the First Lady's Club!

First Lady Andrea Conte expressed a special thanks to Warden Jack Morgan, Union President Bill Shillings and the staff and inmates for their contributions and support to these very worthwhile efforts.

NECX- In February, tragedy unfortunately hit two NECX employees. Fire destroyed homes of C/O Charles Willis and family, and C/O Max Blevins and family. Staff had a benefit breakfast and raised \$1,000 to be divided between these two families. Staff at NECX also showed their love and concern (through donations) for C/O Sandra Hick's nine-year-old grandson Josh Shipman, who has been diagnosed with Leukemia. They did not have any hope for him, but he has been put on experimental treatment and it seems to be working for him. Josh is still in the intensive care unit at Mission Hospital receiving chemotherapy in Asheville, NC. ■

National Institute of Corrections Training Update

Assistant Commissioner of Operations, Roland Colson, has been accepted for the *Executive Excellence* training to be held in May at the NIC Academy in Longmont, Colorado. This ten-month executive development program offers competency-based training for future leaders of corrections agencies. Offered in three phases, the innovative learning-centered course provides students with critical core capabilities needed to lead correctional organizations both today and in the future.

Amanda Sluss, Communications Officer, represented TDOC at the *Public and Media Relations* training in Lexington, Kentucky, March 15-17, 2005. This 24-hour training program offered the opportunity to network with other directors of corrections communications as well refine and further develop media management and presentation skills.

James Worthington, BMCX Deputy Warden, attended the *Correctional Leadership Development* training in April at the Academy in Longmont, CO. Based on the Leadership Change Model, this 70-hour course uses a variety of leadership instruments as well as experiential activities for this systems-approach training.

Burton Mixer, RMSI, Case Manager/Correctional Counselor, is scheduled to attend the *Management of Violent, High Risk and Supermax Inmates* in April in Colorado Springs, Colorado. This 36-hour program focuses on programming, planning and operational issues specific to this population.

Management Development for the Future, Phase II, will be hosted by TDOC and NIC at the Read House Hotel in Chattanooga in late June. Students will present the project progress reports to the Commissioner, Deputy Commissioner, Assistant Commissioners and Wardens at this session. Since their Phase I training, all students have been working on their NIC projects as well as working with the commissioner's task forces. ■

Close-up on

Sharmila Patel

Commissioner White appointed Sharmila Patel as the department's new Director of Education on January 24, 2005. Patel comes to TDOC from the YWCA's NewStart Program at the Tennessee Prison for Women.

Prior to corrections, Patel was an English teacher at Clemson University for 5 years and Greenville Technical College for 2 1/2 years.

She earned a Bachelor of Arts degree from Mercer University in

Macon, GA, and a Master's degree from Clemson University in Clemson, SC.

Patel is a newlywed (married 15 months) and lives in Franklin with her husband Philip, her seven-year-old stepson Edward, and two rabbits, Hazel and Claire.

She hit the ground running by visiting and touring facilities, and meeting with education staff statewide. ■

*Congratulations to...***Roberta Anderson**

Roberta Anderson was officially appointed to the position of Director of Sentence Management in February 2005. Roberta's 30-year career with TDOC began in 1974 at the Turney Center Industrial Prison. This department is fortunate to have such a dedicated, knowledgeable person managing this critical department. Please wish Roberta much success and congratulations.

*Introducing...***Jann Dower**

For those who haven't met her yet, Jann Dower joined the commissioner's complex in January 2005 as administrative assistant to legal, legislation, and policy, planning and research.



After graduating from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville with a degree in sociology and criminal justice in 2001, she worked for the Campbell County Finance Department before joining the County Mayor's staff.

Please welcome Jann to the TDOC family and to her new home in Nashville.

Melanie Shepherd

On March 1, Melanie Shepherd joined the central office health services staff as Special Projects Coordinator. She comes to us from Northeast Correctional Complex, where she has held several positions since joining TDOC in 1994. Melanie misses all of her friends and co-workers at NECX, but she and her family are having lots of fun living in Nashville!



Melanie recently received a bachelor's degree in business administration from King College in Bristol, Tenn. She is also registered as a dental assistant and X-ray technologist.

Let's extend a warm welcome to Melanie!

Mary Carpenter

Mary Carpenter joined TDOC's newly named Department of Human Resources as Affirmative Action/EEOC Officer in January 2005. Mary also spearheads the training program for TDOC employees statewide. If you haven't had a chance to meet Mary yet, please stop by and introduce yourself. She is located on the 3rd floor of the Rachel Jackson Building in Nashville. ■



A Farewell to Linda Dodson

Linda, All of us here at TDOC owe you a debt of gratitude. We salute you for your talents, efforts and numerous contributions to the Department of Correction over the past 30 years. Thank you for helping us go from "Good to Great!"

-Commissioner Quenton I. White

There is an old saying that "success requires no excuses." Linda certainly has never had to make any excuses about her work because she has always been successful during very trying times. What would have overwhelmed many average people was just another day at work for her and she was always professional yet approachable. We will all miss her.

-BOPP Chairman Charles Traugher

Linda, I wish you the best in all you do. I will miss you and the close friendship we have had over the many years since our Bledsoe and Gary Livesay days. We have been through a lot and I have learned a lot working with you. You have contributed greatly to this Dept and its employees. Your patience and attention to the finer details is a definite virtue. Keep in contact.

-Your friend- Howard Carlton

I first became acquainted with Linda in 1984 when I transferred to Southeastern

Livesay. I remember all of the long and difficult hours that we worked after the 1985 riots, which ended up being very rewarding for the institution and our department. Linda is my friend and has always had my support and I wish her well in her future endeavors.

- Warden David Mills

Linda - I want to first let Ms. Linda know how much I appreciate you as a person and superior. You have been a true blessing to me in many ways. You have been refreshing...as refreshing as a drink from a mountain spring! You have challenged me to take a really good look at myself and lastly, you have softened me. May God richly bless you and keep you, may his face shine brightly upon you and give you peace. I have learned to love you as a friend and mentor...God Speed.

-Deputy Warden Charles Simmons

To a professional and my friend Ms. Linda Dodson, I could always count on you for your professional, calm approach to problems in an environment that could be chaotic at times. You made my job as Assistant Commissioner much easier. I will never forget you! If you need me, just call.

-Bobby Halliburton

Linda, You have been the quiet, strong influence that has seen the department through many changes of administrations. You have unselfishly met the many challenges



Linda - When I first met you in 1989 at STSR, I admired your dedication and work ethic. In the sixteen years since, that admiration has grown enormously. You've been my role model, my mentor, and my friend, and I don't expect your leaving will change that at all. I will miss

working with you every day, but I know where you live, and you're never all that far away anyway, as I carry you in my heart.

- Sindy Parker

as Associate Warden of Security. There are hundreds and hundreds of good memories and funny stories we have been shared through the years. I guess the strongest memories I have involve her and Gary

always focusing on what is best for the department. Your in-depth knowledge of corrections combined with your straightforward style of presenting information has always inspired confidence with the members of the Oversight Committee on Corrections. Your solid leadership has been an anchor for the department's staff - all the way from central office to the wardens and staff in the prisons. You have been unflappable in spite of the pressures of your demanding work. Thank you for your commitment to the department. Our corrections system is stronger and safer because of your influence.

-With deep appreciation, SOCC Executive Director Claire Drowota

GOVERNOR'S TASK FORCE ON THE USE OF ENHANCEMENT FACTORS IN CRIMINAL SENTENCING ISSUES RECOMMENDATIONS

Below is an excerpt from the task force's final report. To read the full report, log on to the Administrative Offices of the Courts web site at www.tsc.state.tn.us

On June 24, 2004, the United States Supreme Court announced its opinion in *Blakely v. Washington*, 124 S.Ct. 2531 (2004). Though some significant differences exist between the Tennessee statute and the Washington statute which was before the Court, the essential element of a presumptive sentence in the Act is undoubtedly unconstitutional and a violation of a citizen's right to a jury trial on an issue of fact which would enhance or increase a person's punishment.

Because of the immediate and substantial impact of *Blakely* on the administration of criminal justice in the State of Tennessee, Governor Phil Bredesen appointed a Task Force for the purpose of immediately studying the implications of *Blakely v. Washington* and recommending changes to our sentencing laws to remove the constitutional infirmities of the statute.

At its initial meeting, the Task Force heard testimony of various individuals who had been designated by the Chair to serve in an advisory capacity to the Task Force. The responses of Tennessee courts to the *Blakely* opinion had been varied. Some courts were only imposing the minimum sentence, except in those instances in which the defendant had a prior criminal record or the defendant had admitted the existence of other enhancement factors. Some courts were empanelling jurors to determine the existence of enhancement factors beyond a reasonable doubt. Other courts were not because there is no authority for such procedure under the current statutes.

By unanimous vote, the Task Force decided that the issue confronting the State of Tennessee was of such complexity and uncertainty that any immediate response was ill advised. The Task Force also determined that a crisis was not present because criminal defendants were still being sentenced and the worst of the criminal defendants were still eligible for an increased sentence. Thus, the Task Force unanimously advised the Governor against calling a special session of the General Assembly.

After considering various options, the Task Force developed two distinctly different approaches to amending the Tennessee statutes. The first proposal established a bifurcated procedure for jury trials on factual issues regarding enhancement factors. The second proposal eliminated presumptive sentences and provided that the presence of enhancement factors and mitigating factors would be advisory only. The impact of each alternative on the administration of justice was unknown.

Concerns were expressed that the first proposal would increase service time of jurors, increase jury trial time on the court docket, impose increased burdens on public defenders and district attorneys, and otherwise increase the costs of the administration of

justice. The second proposal caused many concerns regarding the potential for reducing the consistency, uniformity and predictability of sentencing in Tennessee and potentially resulting in significant increased cost resulting from increased sentences. In view of these concerns, the Task Force chose to await the United States Supreme Court decisions in *United States v. Booker* and *United States v. Fanfan* before making its final recommendation to the Governor. *Booker* and *Fanfan* were decided by the United States Supreme Court on January 12, 2005.

The decisions in *Booker* and *Fanfan* allowed the Task Force to develop a compromise proposal which is calculated at maintaining the uniformity, consistency and predictability of sentencing in Tennessee without incurring the additional cost and burdens of either of the initial alternatives. The Task Force recommended to the Governor for presentation to the General Assembly, the Criminal Sentencing Reform Act of 2005.

This proposed Act eliminates presumptive sentencing from Tennessee sentencing law so as to comply with the United States Supreme Court decisions.

The former presumptive sentence provisions are replaced with a series of guidelines that include enhancement and mitigating factors and a statement of principles and sentencing considerations. The proposed Act requires the judge to consider, but not be bound by, these advisory guidelines to arrive at an appropriate sentence, which is subject to appellate review.

Although the task force recommended necessary changes, the essential components of this proposed Act will retain the policies and purposes of the 1989 Act that have served our State well. Defendants who are convicted of crimes in the State of Tennessee will continue to be sentenced within the ranges of punishment established by the General Assembly. Trial judges will continue to set forth their reasons for the sentence which is imposed; however, there will be no presumptive sentence. Because the ranges of punishment are relatively narrow and because the policies and purposes of the statute will serve as a basis for evaluation of the sentence actually imposed, it is believed that the proposed Criminal Sentencing Reform Act of 2005 will achieve its purpose without substantial adverse impact on the criminal justice system of the State of Tennessee. ■

TDOC Newsline

Tennessee Department of Correction

Published by the
Tennessee Department of Correction
320 Sixth Avenue North, 4th Floor
Nashville, TN 37243-0465

Phil Bredesen, Governor
Quenton White, Commissioner
Amanda Sluss, Editor

Tennessee Department of General Services, Graphic Arts
Services/Amanda Sluss, Design and Layout

